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Notes and Communications

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Notes and communications

More magic spells and formulae¹

Plates I–IV

A new text edition usually stimulates further publications and evaluations of similar texts. This situation particularly applies to J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic spells and formulae* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993), since much new material has come to light in recent years. The present article consists of additional texts which have special relevance to the above mentioned volume (see my review of Naveh-Shaked in this issue). Two magic bowls which appeared at Sotheby's (London) in 1985 were copied by me and sent to Naveh and Shaked for study and publication. One bowl in Jewish Aramaic script (Text A) was also copied by the present writer, but the bowl was not easily legible, and Naveh and Shaked chose not to include it within the corpus of bowls, because neither the photographs nor the hand copy were sufficiently reliable. Since the present owner and location of the bowl is unknown, I have included my hand copy of the bowl here, with an attempt to read as much as is reasonably legible, in the hope that eventually the bowl will reappear and corrections to these readings can be made, through collation of the original. A second bowl, in Syriac script, was edited by Naveh and Shaked (Bowl 17), but since they chose not to publish the hand copy of the bowl, it is given below (as Text B).

Finally, a unique amulet on lead written in Aramaic with ink is copied and edited as Text C. It differs from the Mandaic lead amulets, which are etched into the lead, as are other Aramaic amulets on silver or other metals. Since the text is similar to the magic bowls, it is included here as belonging to this genre of texts. It is not clear why an incantation would have been written on lead rather than on a clay bowl, since no explanations of the associated rituals or uses of these objects have been preserved except for various references to amulets and praxes in the Babylonian Talmud, which may or may not be relevant to these objects.

Text A: *Jewish-Aramaic Bowl (Sotheby's)*

The following Jewish-Aramaic bowl (see pls. I, II) was copied by me while it was in Sotheby's (London). The copy of the bowl is offered here since there is enough which is legible and understandable to be usable for comparative purposes, and the text itself is interesting in that it mentions both demons Ashmodai and Abraxas. Furthermore, the bowl contains divorce formulae which are known from other bowls.

¹ I would like to thank Professors Shaul Shaked and Joseph Naveh and Christa Müller-Kessler for suggestions and significant corrections of the readings of the amulet and magic bowls published here, and to my student, Mr Dan Levene, with whom I read these texts.

A. Jewish-Aramaic Bowl (Sotheby's)

- 5 חט אכלת ליתא
 10 כפא אכלת ליתא
 15 דתחלת דנש
 20 א בויבין יפלאח לילית
 25 חזרת דנש

4. [.....] על הכא [.....]
 5. [.....] א[ן](מ)יכי אבלת ליליתא [.....] ליליתא [.....]
 6. [ד](ה)דריא יהך אקאתא מומנא ומשבענא על[יכון] [.....]
 7. דתידמתון (בדמות) [.....] א דאיתקדש {גיס} דגיסא דא
 8. דהוא שליט על טור ועל (ימ)[א] על ליליתא ועל {ב} מבכלות[א] ליליתא על
 9. פי ליליתא והא אנא כתבית גיטא דנן ופטריית יתיכי
 10. כמה ד(כתיבי) שידי (גיטא) (לנ)שי וליליתא(א) ולא חדרין שקולי גיטיכי
 11. וקבלי מומתיכי וקדחי (וזועי) ופוקי (עולי) מן ביתה
 12. דב[.....] (ב)ת שיסאי ודזבינא בר ניונדוד

13. מן ביתה מן פשורה ומן דירתיה ומן קינינה דברתא
14. (דה) מין מובשש בת מחיצא [.....] הדין [.....]
15. דתיתחתמת בישמיה דסיר {עלת} עלה בעיזקתה דסיר עלה
16. שום (ב) [.....] (בב) [.....] סרי עלמא משיצפת (ומידרא אידי) אמן
17. אמן (ס)[לה] [אסי]רין שידין וחתימן לילין חתימן לילין ואסירין שידין בחתמא
18. רבא דאשמדאי מלכא דשידא בחתמא אחידנא ב(מ)שרי
19. דלילתא כדין מומנא ומשבנא לכוון בפלחדד שידא דהוא
20. אביכוון ובפלחס ליליתא דהי אימיכוון דתיזעון ותיפקון
21. מן [.....](מי) מן פשוריה ומן קינינה ומן בניה
22. ומן איתתה ולא תידמוון לה בידמות זכרין (איתכוון)
23. דגנבין וחטפין ולא תיחטוון בהון לא בזרעא דימאמא
24. ולא [.....] (אודאמן דאסיר)יתון
25. חותימיתון מן שמיה דאברכסס רבא מאסרי ליי שידא
26. [.....] (יטכי שדי)

() = uncertain or broken letters
 [] = restored letters

Translation

5. [..... that] your mother is 'Ablat Lilith, [.....] Lilith [.....]
 6. [of?] the returning ones. Go! I beswear and adjure you evil ones [...]
 7. who appear in the guise of [.....]—which has been dedicated—of this troop
 8. which was ruling over the mountain and over the sea, over Lilith and over the *mbklt'*, lilith against lilith. Thus I wrote this divorce-writ and I divorced you
 10. like the demons who have written divorces for (their) wives and liliths, that they cannot return. Take your divorce-writ
 11. and receive your bann and move off and flee and depart from the house
 12. of [.....] Šišai and of Zbina bar Niwanduk,
 13. from the house and from the table and from the dwelling and from the possessions of *that* daughter,
 14. from Mubašas bat Mehiša [.....] this [.....]
 15. that you are sealed in the name of *syr w'lh* and in the seal-ring of *syr w'lh*,

Text C: *Babylonian Jewish-Aramaic amulet*

The following amulet (see pls. III, IV) has been written for a client named Duday bat Imma d-Imma (namely, 'Duday, daughter of Grandmother'), which coincidentally matches well with Bowl 21 of the Naveh-Shaked corpus, written for one Duday bat Imma ('Duday daughter of Mother'). The lead amulet, which is unique in that it is ink written on lead, belongs to the collection of Mr. S. Moussaieff. The reverse is read by turning the amulet end over end rather than sideways.²

Obverse

- 1'. [...] מלאכה דיהוה
- 2'. בשמיה <ד>אמאיאל סרא
- 3'. רבה דישראל ובשמיה
- 4'. דרפאל אסיה רבה ובשמיה[ה]
- 5'. דתחומיאל מלאכה דממ(נ)ני
- 6'. על מעון כפא דארעה
- 7'. דתסלק(ק)ו(י?) (ו)תפדו ותשזבו
- 8'. ותפצו ית דודאי בת
- 9'. אימה דימא מן כל רוחין
- 10'. בישין ומן כול עובדין בישין
- 11'. ומן כל חרשנין בישין ד(מ)רעין
- 12'. (.....) ראשיה {דמבע}
- 13'. דמבאשין ית פגרהא דיזועון
- 14'. ידחלון ויתברון מן קדם
- 15'. (ד)שמה רבה הדין דחילא
- 16'. וקדישא יא יא בב חו אא
- 17'. בב וו אה יי אהיה יהה אאי
- 18'. ייה הוההי אאא יהוה דכל
- 19'. (מ)ני בריתא דמיתחזא אמנן
- 20'. [א]מן סלה תוב אשבעית ית[כון]
- 21'. רוחין בישין וכל חומרין זיד[נין]
- 22'. [כ]ל מרען בישין דאית בפ(ג)[ריה]
- 23'. דדודאי בת אימה דימה

² I am grateful to Dr Bruce Zuckerman and Kenneth Zuckerman for excellent photos of this amulet. (pls. III, IV).

- י24. [ב]שום יאהו צבאות אבר
 י25. אסכס אקר ממכרי
 י26. (ס)סנגין בר פרנגיס (צור)[ני]
 י27. אל פדיאל כיאל פצני[אל]

Reverse

- י1. [...]עיה (כעין)
 י2. [...]ב[לילא (ב){עי}
 י3. עידנין מן יומה דננן
 י4. [ל]עלס אמן אמן סלה
 י5. (.ני אסיריתון {וחתימ}
 י6. חתימתון כל צרין בי(ש)ין
 י7. (מר)עין בישין מן דודאי
 י8. (ב)ת אימה דימה {בעיזק}
 י9. בעיזקתיה דשלמה
 (three lines of magical letters)
 י13. (...)דלא תעיקון להא
 י14. ולא תשלטון בהא מן
 י15. יומה דגן ולעלס בין
 י16. בימה ובין בלילי אמן אמן

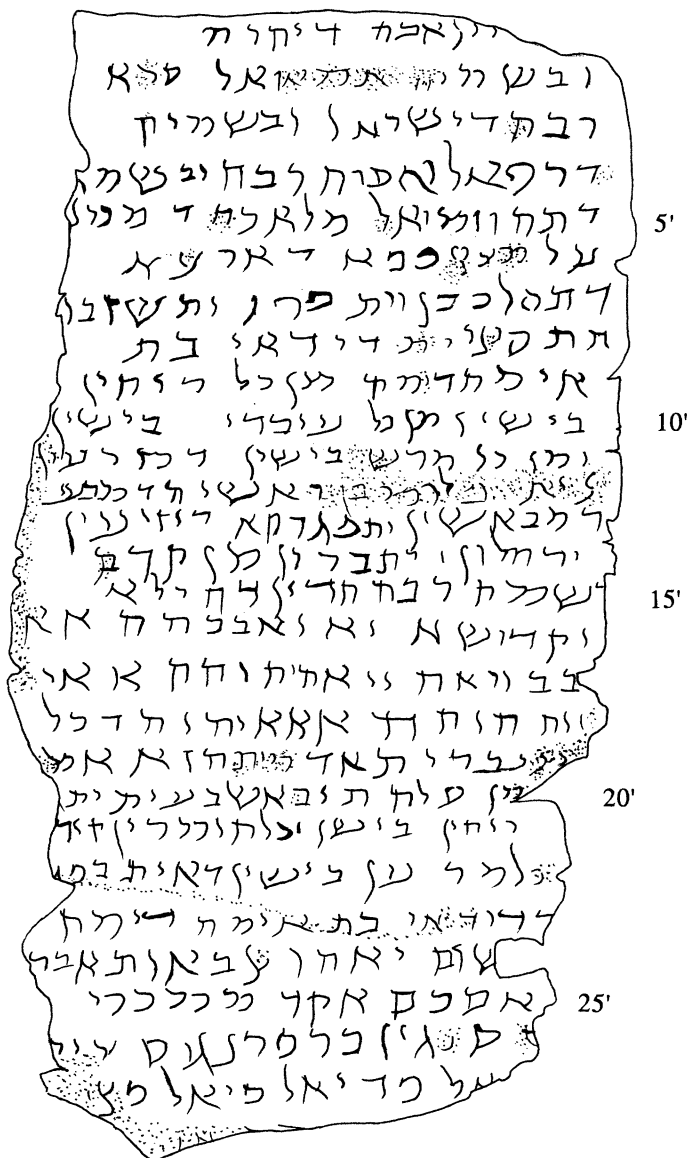
() = uncertain or broken letters

[] = restored letters

Translation

- 1' [In the name of] angel of God,
 2' and in the name of Amiel(?) the great prince
 3' of Israel, and in the name
 4' of Raphael, the great healer, and in the name
 5' of Tehumiel the angel, who is appointed
 6' over the dwelling of the arch of the earth,
 7' so that you remove and redeem and rescue
 8' and free Duday bat
 9' Imma d-Imma, from all evil
 10' spirits, and from all evil (magical) acts
 11' and from all evil sorcerers which harm
 12' [...] his head
 13' and they who do evil to her body, may they move away

C. Moussaieff Amulet obv.



14' and be afraid and be broken, because of

15' this great name of this awesome

16' and holy one Y' Y' BB HW "

17' BB WW 'H YY 'HYH YHH "Y

18' YYH HWHHY " YHWH, of all

19' manner of creature which is to be seen, amen,

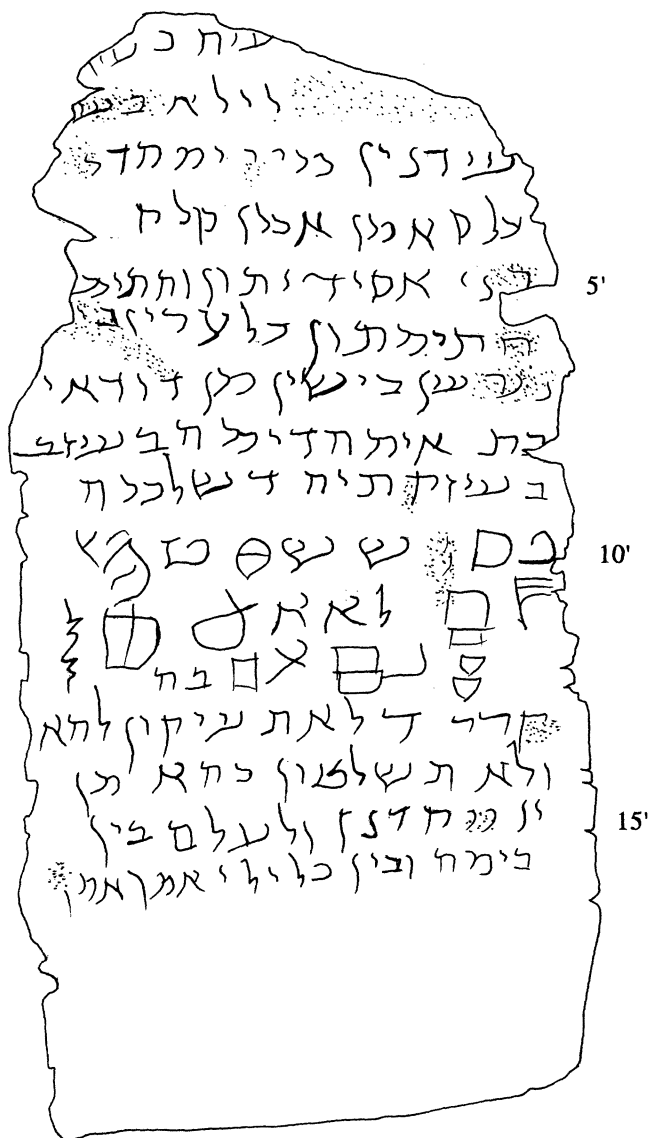
20' amen, selah. Again, I have adjured you,

21' all evil spirits and all impious charms

22' and all evil illnesses which are in the body

23' of Duday bat Imma d-Imma,

Moussaieff Amulet rev.



24' [in the] name Y'HW Sabaoth Abrax-

25' sas Akar-mamkari

26' (Sas)sangin bar Parangis, Suri-

27' el, Padiel, Kiel Paš[el]

rev.

1' (illegible)

2' [..by day or] night, in (correct)

3' times, from today

4' forever(!), amen, amen, selah.

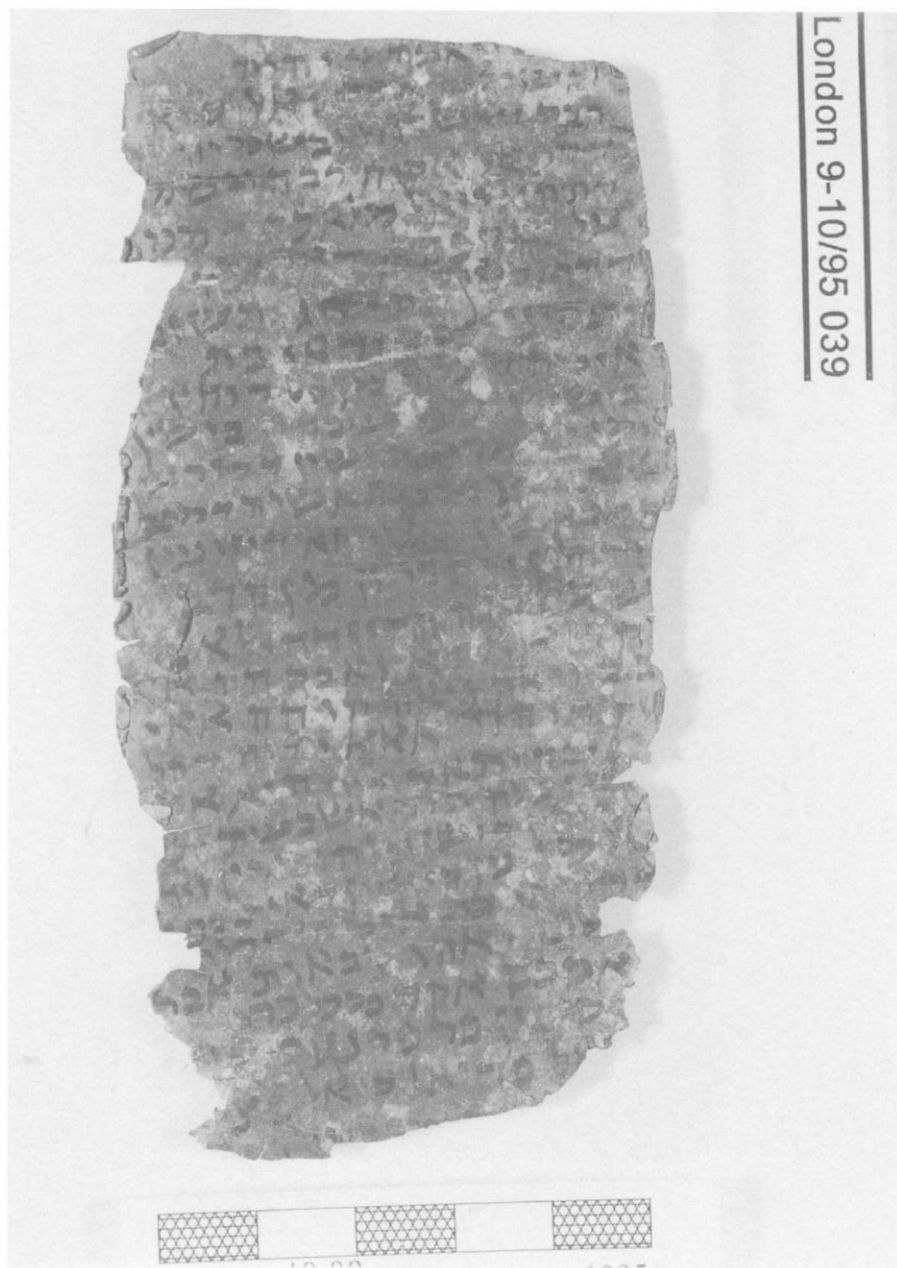
PLATE I



Jewish-Aramaic bowl.

PLATE II





Babylonian Jewish-Aramaic amulet, obv.

PLATE IV



Babylonian Jewish-Aramaic amulet, rev.

5' [...] you are bound, sealed with
 6' a seal, all evil troubles,
 7' [and] evil afflictions from Duday
 8' bat Imma d-Imma
 9' in the seal ring of Solomon,
 10'–12' (magical characters)
 13' that you do not oppress her,
 14' and that you do not control her, from
 15' this day forth and forever,
 16' either by day or by night, amen, amen.

Notes

1.2'. Although one would expect the angel Michael to appear here (together with Raphael), nevertheless the reading *mky'l* does not fit the traces.

1.6'. For the word *kyp'*, cf. Naveh and Shaked, *AMB*, 5:2, with the note p. 161.

1.7' . The first word in the line appears to be corrupt for *dtslyqw*, 'you (pl.) remove' [i.e. the victim from the demonic attack].

1.12'. The letters, although visible, are too faded to render sense. As for the end of the line, as in ll. 2' and 8' of the reverse, the scribe seems to have begun a word without sufficient space in the line to complete it, so he rewrote the full word in the following line.

1.26'. For the name Sassangin bar Parangis, see Naveh and Shaked, *AMB A*, 7:10. Shaul Shaked has also drawn my attention to H. D. Betz, *Greek magical papyri* (Chicago, 1986), 20:83, which mentions the magical names AKRAMMACHAMARI SESENGENBARPHARANGES, which also appear in this amulet.

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A Bactrian god

The Kushan god $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ is attested on a group of rare coins of Kanishka I, where he is depicted as a bearded male bearing a trident in his right hand and riding a two-headed horse.¹ It has been universally assumed that the name $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ is connected in some way with that of Ahura Mazda, the supreme deity of the Zoroastrian religion, the second element of the Bactrian form being generally interpreted as an epithet meaning ‘victorious’.²

The interpretation of $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ as ‘Mazda the victorious’ has been opposed by Humbach, who objects that such an epithet is not applied to Ahura Mazda anywhere in the Zoroastrian literature and draws attention to the fact that the Bactrian word for ‘victorious’ is attested in the form $\omicron\omicron\omicron\iota\nu\delta\omicron$ (rather than $\ast\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$). His solution is to postulate a compound $\ast\mu\alpha\zeta\delta\bar{a}-\mu\alpha\eta\bar{a}$ ‘Winner of Wisdom’.³ According to Humbach, $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ ‘is portrayed as a Kuṣāṇa king ..., [which] gives the impression that he is a sort of tribal god of the Kuṣāṇas, or a family god of their royal family’. Since a double-headed horse would be regarded by Zoroastrians as a creature of the Evil Spirit, $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ is ‘likely to be a non-Zoroastrian antagonist of Ahura Mazdā’.

Humbach’s objections to the interpretation of $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ as ‘Mazda the victorious’ are valid if not absolutely conclusive. His own reconstruction is open to similar objections, however. No god named ‘Winner of Wisdom’ is attested anywhere else in the Iranian world. Nor is it clear why the $\bar{a}$ - of a compound such as $\ast\mu\alpha\zeta\delta\bar{a}-\mu\alpha\eta\bar{a}$ should have been lost (contrast the personal names $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\bar{a}-\beta\alpha\nu\delta\alpha\gamma\omicron$ and $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\bar{a}-\mu\alpha\rho\eta\gamma\omicron$, both meaning ‘servant of Mazda’, which are attested in unpublished documents of later date).

The divine name $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ occurs once more in a Bactrian inscription of Kanishka I recently discovered at Rabatak in the province of Baghlan, Afghanistan.⁴ This inscription contains a list of divinities headed by two goddesses: $\iota\alpha\ \alpha\mu\sigma\alpha\ \nu\alpha\eta\alpha\ \omicron\delta\omicron\ \iota\alpha\ \alpha\mu\sigma\alpha\ \omicron\mu\mu\alpha$, probably to be understood as ‘the lady Nana and the lady Umma’. There follows a series of male deities: $\alpha\omicron\omicron\omicron\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\ \mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\ \sigma\omicron\omicron\beta\alpha\rho\delta\omicron\ \nu\alpha\rho\alpha\sigma\alpha\omicron\ \mu\iota\mu\omicron$ ‘Ahura Mazda, $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$, Srosh-ard, Narseh, Mihr’. The natural interpretation of this wording is that $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ is a divinity distinct from Ahura Mazda.⁵ It cannot perhaps be ruled out that $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ may here be used as an epithet (rather than a name)

¹ J. M. Rosenfield, *The dynastic arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley, 1967), 82–3; R. Göbl, *System und Chronologie der Münzprägung des Kuṣānreiches* (Wien, 1984), 42 and pl. 167.

² So far as I know, this etymology was first proposed by J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Paideuma*, vii, 1960, 213–14.

³ H. Humbach, *Mithraic Studies*, I, (ed.) J. R. Hinnells (Manchester, 1975), 139, followed by G. Dj. Davary, *Baktrisch: ein Wörterbuch auf Grund der Inschriften, Handschriften, Münzen und Siegelsteine* (Heidelberg, 1982), 234.

⁴ N. Sims-Williams and J. Cribb, ‘A new Bactrian inscription of Kanishka the Great’, *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, iv, [1995–]1996, 75–142.

⁵ The name of Ahura Mazda appears here in a more archaic spelling than the $\omega\omicron\omicron\omicron\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron$ attested a generation later on a coin of Huvishka (the authenticity of which is doubtful according to Humbach, art. cit., 139–40). Forms such as $\omega\omicron\omicron\omicron\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron$, $\omega\omicron\omicron\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron$, $\omega\omicron\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron$, attested in the Kushano-Sasanian period (as a personal rather than a divine name) probably represent MP $\bar{o}(h)rmuzd$. In my edition of the text I contemplated an alternative reading $\alpha\theta\beta\omicron\ \mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron$, which could be understood as ‘Fire (son) of Mazda’, cf. Av. *ātarš ahurahe mazdā* ‘Fire (son) of Ahura Mazda’, but it is highly doubtful whether this pregnant use of the genitive would have survived into Bactrian.

of Ahura Mazda, but an epithet containing a repetition of the god's name is scarcely plausible.

Since the iconography of *μoζδοοαβο* provides no support for his identification with Ahura Mazda, the connexion in fact rests solely on a phonetic coincidence in one syllable. It is time to be resolute in abandoning it. The alternative which I should like to propose—and which, as I am happy to acknowledge, has occurred independently to Dr Ilya Gershevitch—is to derive *μoζδοοαβο* from a form cognate with Vedic *mīdhvāms-* 'generous, gracious'. For the existence of this term in Iranian and its use as a name of a divinity one may refer to Gershevitch's reconstruction of the feminine equivalent **miždušī-* (= Vedic *mīdhuṣī-*) as the name of a goddess mentioned in two Elamite tablets from Persepolis.⁶ In addition, it seems likely that Late Khotanese *mājsai-* 'woman' derives from **miždušakī-*, literally 'gnädige (Frau)'.⁷

In form *mīdhvāms-* appears to be an unreduplicated perfect participle,⁸ of which the expected form in Iranian would be **miždwah-*. The nasal suffix of *μoζδοοαβο* finds a parallel in Khot. *māde*, *mā(ś)dān(a)-* 'gracious', which Ernst Leumann long ago compared with *mīdhvāms-*.⁹ The comparison deserves to be retained, though Leumann's formulation of the relationship between the two forms (*-vāms-* active, *-āna-* middle participle) is ruled out by the athematic nom. sg. m. *māde*. Emmerick rightly classifies the Khotanese form as an *-n-* stem, which he explains as **miždān-* from **mižda-Han-*, i.e. **mižda-* 'reward' (Av. *mižda-*, Vedic *mīdhā-*, Greek *μισθός*) plus the possessive suffix **-Han-* identified by Karl Hoffmann.¹⁰ This derivation is phonologically unexceptionable. However, since Vedic *mīdhvāms-* is known to have had cognates in Iranian and probably even in Khotanese, it requires the assumption that one unusual and archaic formation was replaced by another. Such an assumption seems implausible, especially in view of the fact that Khot. *māde* would be the regular outcome of OIran. **miždwāh*, nom. sg. m. of the expected **miždwah-*.¹¹ The replacement of **-h-* by **-n-* in the rest of the paradigm could in theory be a comparatively recent development due to the ambiguity of the nom. sg. in **-wāh*: in Old Iranian stems in **-wan-* had nom. sg. m. in **-wā*, but this was systematically extended to **-wāh (>-(v)e)* in Khotanese,¹² with the result that a nom. sg. *māde < *miždwāh* could have been reinterpreted as belonging to a stem **miždwan-*. If Bactr. *μoζδοοαβο* is to be compared with Khot. *mā(ś)dān-*, however, it is necessary to place the creation of the stem **miždwan-* at a much earlier period. So far as I can see, such a development would in fact be perfectly plausible even in the remotest antiquity, in view of the interchange of **-wah-*, **-wan-*, and **-want-* in cases such as the Avestan name of the mythical hero *vīuuay hañt-* (Vedic *vivāsvant-*) beside **vīuuay han-* and **vīuuay hah-* (in the

⁶ I. Gershevitch, *TPS*, 1969, 174, and *apud* R. T. Hallock, *Persepolis fortification tablets* (Chicago, 1969), 732.

⁷ Rather than from **mazišakī-* as previously proposed (N. Sims-Williams, *Proceedings of the first European Conference of Iranian Studies*, 1, (ed.) Gh. Gnoli and A. Panaino (Rome, 1990 [1991]), 292–4). I have discussed the phonological details of the new etymology in a contribution to R. E. Emmerick, *Studies in the vocabulary of Khotanese*, III, Vienna, 123–4 (forthcoming).

⁸ F. B. J. Kuiper, *Acta Orientalia*, XII, 1934, 234; J. Wackernagel and A. Debrunner, *Altindische Grammatik*, II/2 (Göttingen, 1954), 910.

⁹ E. Leumann, *Zur nordarischen Sprache und Literatur* (Strassburg, 1912), 72.

¹⁰ R. E. Emmerick, *Saka grammatical studies* (London, 1968), 338, referring to K. Hoffmann, 'Ein grundsprachliches Possessivsuffix', *MSS*, VI, 1955, 35–40.

¹¹ For the simplification of the cluster **dv* in *māde < *mā(ś)dve* cf. *nađe < *nrtāwāh*, nom. sg. of *naḍaun- < *nrtāwan-* 'man'.

¹² cf. Emmerick, *op. cit.*, 337. The secondary addition of **-h-* to the nom. sg. m. is also found in Khot. *-r-* stems, e.g. *pāte* 'father' < **pitā-h-*. Its function was perhaps to characterize these forms more clearly as masculines.

patronymic adjectives *vīuuaŋ hana-* and *vīuuaŋ huša-*), or the Avestan feminine personal names *vispa.tauruuairī-* and *vispa.tauruštī-*, which are formed as if to stems **tauruuan-* and **tauruuah-* respectively, though the original form of the stem was probably **tauruuant-* (cf. Hittite *tarhunt-*, Vedic *tūrvant-*, Av. nom. sg. m. *ṭbaēšō.tauruuā* ‘overcoming enmity’ and *vərəθra.tauruuā* ‘overcoming resistance’, inflected on the analogy of possessives in *-uant-*).¹³

If the inflexion of Khot. *māde, mā(ṣ) dān(a)-* as an *-n*-stem is comparatively old, as the equation with *μoζδοοαβο* would imply, this may help to account for the apparently identical inflexion of Khot. *urmaysde* ‘sun’, whose nom. sg. evidently derives directly from Old Iranian **ahura-mazdāh* (cf. Av. *ahurō mazdā*, OP *auramazdā*) but whose other forms indicate a stem *urmaysdān(a)-*.¹⁴ In the Khotanese Buddhist literature *mā(ṣ) dān(a)-* is chiefly used as an epithet of the Buddha. If the underlying **miždwan-* was used in pre-Buddhist Khotan, as in Bactria, as the name or epithet of a divinity there would be a clear associative reason for it to have provided a source for the analogical restructuring of the awkward paradigm of **ahura-mazdā*.¹⁵ Cf. the development of forms such as Vedic *pánthānas*, Avestan *pantānō* as nom. pl. to the stem *pánthā-/pantā-* ‘path’ by analogy with the synonymous *-n*-stem *ádhvan-/aduan-*.¹⁶

Several facts suggest that one might consider identifying *μoζδοοαβο* with the god who is depicted on the coins of virtually all the Kushan rulers in the form of the Indian Śiva and who is named as *oŋbo* (= Av. *vaiiūš*, MPers. *way*, Sogdian *wyšprkr*) on coins of Kanishka and his successors.¹⁷ Since this god was evidently one of the chief deities in the Kushan pantheon, one naturally expects him to be included in the list in the Rabatak inscription. If *μoζδοοαβο* means ‘the Gracious one’, the name is virtually synonymous with that of Śiva (= Vedic *śivá-* ‘kind, benevolent, auspicious’). The portrait of *μoζδοοαβο* shows him holding a trident, the symbol of Śiva, and riding a two-headed horse, which could possibly be related to the dual nature of the god Vayu, the *way ī weh* ‘Way the better’ and *way ī wattar* ‘Way the worse’ of the Pahlavi texts, and more distantly to the three-faced *wyšprkr* of the Sogdian Vessantara Jataka and the three-headed *oŋbo/Śiva* portrayed on certain Kushan coins.¹⁸ In other respects, however, the iconography of *μoζδοοαβο* is entirely different from that of *oŋbo*, who is always shown standing and beardless. Until a closer parallel to the figure of *μoζδοοαβο* is found, the identification of the god must remain speculative.

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¹³ See further Wackernagel-Debrunner, op. cit., 894, 903–5; J. Schindler, *Investigationes philologicae et comparativae: Gedenkschrift für Heinz Kronasser*, (ed.) E. Neu (Wiesbaden, 1982), 200–201.

¹⁴ Emmerick, op. cit., 347–8.

¹⁵ cf. the OP gen. sg. *Auramazdāha*, as explained by F. B. J. Kuiper, *On Zarathustra's language* (Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, N. R., xli/4), (Amsterdam, 1978), 7: gen. ending **-ah* secondarily added to disambiguate the nom./gen. in **-āh*.

¹⁶ Conversely, the GAv. nom. sg. *aduua* may be due to influence of *pantā*. See C. Bartholomae, *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*, 1, (ed.) W. Geiger and E. Kuhn (Strassburg, 1895), 118.

¹⁷ See H. Humbach, *Monumentum H. S. Nyberg*, I (Acta Iranica, IV), Tehran-Liège, 1975, 402–8. As Frantz Grenet has pointed out to me, one of the problems to be confronted is the fact that both *oŋbo* and *μoζδοοαβο* are depicted on coins belonging to the same (third) emission of Kanishka.

¹⁸ This last point too I owe to Frantz Grenet. Humbach, art. cit., 405, suggests that the third face of *wyšprkr* may correspond to a third ‘neutral’ aspect of the god.

Bactrian Rudra

N. Sims-Williams's proposed identification¹ of a Bactrian god $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\alpha\upsilon\omicron$ as deriving from Ir. **miždvaḥ*, Vd. *mīdhvās* could shed light on the role of this word as an epithet of Rudra and Śiva in India. The identification would seem in turn to derive support from the extent to which in India the epithet has been appropriated by Vedic Rudra. It is even possible to identify a stratum of Sanskrit literature that shares the Bactrian conception of Mīdhvān as a supreme god.

The word *mīdhvas* appears to be unused and forgotten in classical Sanskrit. Sāyaṇa (ad RV 5.56.9 *mīlhuṣī*) takes his cue from a Yajus: '*mīlhuṣṭama śivatama*' *ityādaḥ darśanān mīdhvān rudrah; tatpatnī mīlhuṣī* 'Mīdhvān is Rudra, as is attested in the text *mīlhuṣṭama śivatama śivó na edhi* ... [MS 2.9.9, ed. L v. S, II, 127; etc.]. Mīdhvān is his wife'. The *Nighaṇṭu* 2.10 cites only the garbled form *mīlhum* as meaning 'wealth',² reflecting presumably *mīlhuṣmant*, *mīlhuṣṭama* (*mīdhvās* would be excluded as a verb form). A Gṛhyasūtra mentions offerings dedicated to Mīdhvān and Mīdhvānī, the female being cited as consort of Īśāna. Apart from the 41 Ṛgvedic occurrences as adjective and as epithet closely associated with Rudra, it seems to survive only sporadically: in the Yajus quoted, and in Brāhmaṇa texts related to this and to the RV texts; in lists of epithets of Śiva in *Mahābhārata* (3.40.174*; 7.173.24; 14.8.16); and in Purāṇa, specifically *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (*BhP*).

BhP 4.7.6f. uses the forms *mīdhvāṣṭama* and *mīdhvas*. There is the implication of a sense 'merciful, gracious', since the intention is to deny Śiva's apparently *aśiva* nature (4.4.16), and the epithets *rudra* and *mṛḍa* are used immediately afterwards with similar reference (4.7.9). There is, however, no compelling reason to infer that *mīdhvas* and *mṛḍa* are used synonymously, any more than *mīdhvāṣṭama* and *śivatama* in the Yajus cited, which would thus be rendered tautologous. Śiva is in the Purāṇa first referred to as *mīdhvas*, when he 'generously' provides Dakṣa with a goat's head (*ajamukhaṃ śiraḥ*); thereupon Dakṣa gratefully looks upon him as *mṛḍa* 'merciful'. In *BhP* 4.24.43, use of the epithet *mīdhvas* enables Śiva to reveal himself, coyly, as a supreme deity (i.e. as ultimate manifestation of Viṣṇu). Hence perhaps its use as verse-filling epithet of Vāsudeva in *Brahmapurāṇa* 59.37 (var. lect.).

Sims-Williams has glossed the epithet as 'generous, gracious', and latterly as 'gracious'. The interpretation 'bountiful, generous' is the more usual, and the only one given or implied by the Sanskrit dictionaries and Bartholomae, 'gracious' being better reserved for other epithets, such as *śivatama* in the Yajus and *suśéva* in RV 1.27.2 [*agnih*] *suśévah*, *mīdhvān asmākaṃ babhūyāt* (Geldner) '[Agni, der] freundliche, sei uns ein Belohner', (Renou) 'le très bienveillant, le libéral ...'. The rider 'gracious' seems traceable to Grassmann's appended 'gnädig';³ but this was possibly wrongly inferred from the Yajus

¹ I am indebted to the author for the opportunity to read his paper 'A Bactrian god' in advance of publication.

² MW cites this (from inadvertence?) as '*mīdhu*, *mīlhu* m.'. One might conjecture an original reading **mīlhuḥ*, uncomprehendingly misread as *mīlham* (variant reported by Lakshman Sarup) and hence, since RV *mīlha-* is covered elsewhere, as *mīlhum*. May one infer from his silence that Yāska was at a loss to illustrate the entry?

³ 'reichen Segen spendend, huldreich, gnädig'; under *mīlhuṣmat* this is summarized as 'huldreich' alone.

mīdhūṣṭama śivatama and encouraged by the difficulty of reconciling feminine *mīlhuṣī* with the then current acceptance of the traditional etymology ($\sqrt{mih}$ 'reichlich strömen, etc.') which survives in Sāyana's glosses, *sekr*, *varṣanavant*, etc.⁴ The rendering should presumably now be dropped. It has maintained itself notably, and with no longer obvious cause, in the one occurrence of the feminine form at 5.56.9 *sácā marútsu rodasī* ... *sácā marútsu mīlhuṣī*, compare (Geldner) 'Rodasī ... bei den Marut', 'bei den Marut ... die Mīlhuṣī (Gnädige)', versus (Renou) 'Rodasī ... la généreuse'. Yet by Geldner's own rendering of 5.56.3 *mīlhuṣmatī*, 'liberal' is suitable, 'gracious' quite unsuitable in that adjacent context.

Given the context of the Bactrian deity, where a pair of female deities, read as Nana and Umma, are followed by a set of male gods beginning with Ahura Mazda and $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$, and Sims-Williams's interpretation of the name $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron$ as cognate with Vedic *Mīdhvān*, the correlation between Rudra and *mīdhvās* in the *Ṛgveda* ought to be examined afresh. As can be seen from Grassmann's listings, it is considerably stronger than appears from the Petersburg dictionary, which lists three specimen collocations with each of Rudra, Agni, and Varuṇa.⁵

While only seven out of 41 *Ṛgvedic* occurrences of *mīdhvās* specifically qualify Rudra, the five plural forms relate to his Maruts.

The one occurrence of *mīlhuṣmatī* (5.56.3ab) designates the female deity, *Prthivī*, who is here at least by the implication of the imagery 'consort of the *mīdhvāmsaḥ* Maruts':⁶

mīlhuṣmatīva prthivī pārāhatā mādanty ety asmād ā

In this striking erotic image (see Geldner, ad loc.⁷), the earth gives way beneath our feet bemusedly [*mādanty ety asmād ā*], abused (by the assaults of the storm-gods) [*pārā-hatā*], like the mate of one who is (sexually rather too) bountiful [*mīlhuṣmatīva*]. The need in English translation to specify one husband (similarly Geldner: 'die einen freigebigen Herrn hat') masks the implied punning reference of *mīdhvās* to the plural Maruts,⁸ as does the impossibility of conveying the implied erotic and meteorological popular etymology from $\sqrt{mih}$. This bold image in terse alliterative verse confirms that the *Ṛgveda* retains a basic literal sense 'bountiful'; and it could have contributed to the specializa-

⁴ This fanciful etymology is explicit in Sāyana ad 1.27.2: *mīdhvān kāmānām varṣitā* ... 'miha secane' ity *asmāt kvasu-pratyayāntaḥ*. It may be already implicit in the erotic application of 5.56.3 *mīlhuṣmatī* (below) and could underlie the meteorological association of the *mīdhvāmsaḥ* Maruts with $\sqrt{mih}/megh-$: 2.34.13 [*marútaḥ*] *niméghamānā átyena pájasā* 'in Roßgestalt herabharrend' (Geldner); 9.74.4 *náro hitām áva mehanti* [*marútaḥ*]: Renou, *EVP*, ix, ad loc.).

The etymology was facilitated by the existence of *mēdhra* (YV, AV) and later ppl. *mīdha* from $\sqrt{mih}$ with urinary and sexual implication. Already RV 4.44.6 *ājamīdhá* 'name of patrons of the Vāmadevas' seems to imply contamination with this *mīdha*, whether or not it has been deformed from a more consistent (and seemly) **ājīmīdhá* (in the *Ṛgveda*, *-mīlha* compounds are regularly collocated with *ājī*). Certainly the later literature has been fascinated by this apparent association of *āja* 'goat' with $\sqrt{mih}$. The text *BhP* 9.19.5f. develops the notion *ajam* ... *mīdhvāmsaḥ yābhakovidam* 'sexually potent goat': cf. the parallel malformation in Devamīdhus (*Brahmap.* 14.2, etc. *devamīdhuṣam*) beside Devamīdha. And the story in *BhP* 4.4 of *mīdhvas* Śiva's restoration of a goat's head to Dakṣa and of its whiskers to Bhṛgu has got to imply a variant interpretation of an **ajamīdhus* as 'donor of a goat'. The *Ājamīdha* clan may be represented, thanks to its acquisition of ṛṣi status, by the similarly redolent name Ājagandhi in Baudhāyana's *Pravarādhyāya*, since this occurs immediately adjacent to the Vāmadevas.

⁵ MW and Apte fail to mention its use as an epithet of Rudra-Śiva.

⁶ cf. the status of Sarasvatī as sole female consort of male gods in the *mīlhuṣmantaḥ* list discussed next.

⁷ Geldner's interpretation is supported by explicit use of *mīdhvas* construed in the sense 'sexually potent' in *BhP* 9.19.5f. (n. 4, above).

⁸ Sāyana: *marutām sākalyena sarvathāprāpter drṣtāntaḥ* 'this expresses obliquely the omnipresence of the Maruts conjointly'.

tion found elsewhere in the R̥gveda of the *mīdhvās* epithet, causing it to be associated perhaps first with the Maruts and hence with their father Rudra and their consort Rodasī. While the Kushan and Bhāgavata use of the term would interestingly record the culmination of this semantic development, it is clear that Sāyaṇa's sources have lost the point of this significant passage totally, by a failure to maintain the literal sense of *mīdhvās* and the implicit association with $\sqrt{mih}$, coupled with a hint of misinterpretation of the preverb *pārā* as *pāra* 'enemy'. Sāyaṇa offers: *mīlhuṣmatī* 'prabalaśvāmikā', *parāhatā* 'upadrutā, anyair abhibhūtā', *prthivīva* 'tadadhiṣṭhitā prajā yathā', *eti* 'svaśvāminam abhigacchati' (*evam hr̥ṣyanty āgacchaty asmān marutsenā*), i.e. '... assailed by enemies, the earth, i.e. its population, seeks refuge with its powerful ruler ...'. Here, he says, 'ruler' is an allusion to the Maruts.

In the one occurrence of masc. pl. *mīlhuṣmantah* (6.50.12), Rudra heads the list of deities to which the term relates. Since the Kushan $\mu\omicron\zeta\delta\omicron\omicron\alpha\nu\omicron$ is depicted as riding a two-headed horse 'which could possibly be related to the dual nature of the god Vayu, the *Way ī weh* "Way the better" and *Way ī wattar* "Way the worse" ' (Sims-Williams, loc. cit.), it is of interest that this list conjoined with *mīlhuṣmantah* not only opens with Rudra, but also closes with Vāyu and Vāta at the hemistich and verse-end respectively:

6.50.12 Rudra–Sarasvatī
 Mīdhuṣmantah–Viṣṇu–Vāyu (*mṛlantu*)
 R̥bhukṣā–Vāja–Vidhātṛ;
 Parjanya–Vāta (*pipyatām*).

The syntax associates the plural epithet with the deities contained in the first three lines. It might well be intended to designate the Maruts (despite Sāyaṇa's improbable construction, whereby it qualifies all seven names as rain gods⁹).

It can even be observed that Vāyu occurs here with Rudra in a deprecatory context ($\sqrt{mṛd}$), while Vāta occurs with Parjanya in a more positive context ($\sqrt{pyā}$, i.e. it is rather the latter two who are the rain gods). This dualism seems to offer a possible explanation for the development found in Iranian. The pairing of Parjanya and Vāta recurs in 10.65f., and Vāta is linked with natural rain in 7.40. Vāyu, on the other hand, is constantly paired with Soma, who shares the epithet *mīdhvās* (seven occurrences). Both are characterized by their draught horses, and one single horse is assigned to the physical wind in 10.136.5 *vātasyāśvo vāyóh sákha*. The literary genre involved in 6.50, the R̥gvedic Viśve Devāh hymn or Pantheon, bears a certain analogy to the listing of deities in a regal inscription such as the Bactrian one in question.

The verse 6.50.12 collocates Rudra and *mīlhuṣmantah* with Sarasvatī (a basically fluvial goddess). Also where *mīdhvās* does not directly qualify Rudra or the Maruts, there is often a strong aquatic implication. Besides the seven occurrences of *mīdhvās* with the fluid Soma, there is one with pluvius Parjanya, and in one of the instances (8.25.14) where *mīdhvāmsah* qualifies the Maruts, they are coupled with *sīndhur apām*.¹⁰ This tends to show that Sāyaṇa's, and (by the implication of *sūtra* 6.1.12) Pāṇini's, conception of the derivation and meaning of *mīdh-* as from $\sqrt{mih}$ 'pour' was shared by the R̥gvedic poets, and determined their development of a meteorological environment for the Maruts and Rudra.

⁹ Geldner lists 'die Belohnenden (?)' separately without comment; Renou (*EVP*, v) cavalierly construes plural *mīlhuṣmantah* with the following two gods, and the next five gods with dual *pipyatām*.

¹⁰ 'Sindhu, best of Waters'? ('unter den Gewässern' Geldner; '[le Fils] des eaux' Renou). This phrase is separated by an intervening word from the Maruts (and others) qualified by the epithet *mīdhvāmsah*.

The true literal meaning ‘bountiful, rewarding’, that survived in Purāṇic use of the epithet, remains, however, everywhere appropriate, as in the nine occurrences of *mīdhvās* with Agni. This is, by comparison with Rudra, an insignificant rate of occurrence in the context of that most frequently mentioned god. The other deities, Indra and the rest, amass four occurrences or less. Even without discounting those instances where *rudrā* itself is used as a mere adjectival epithet of Agni, Indra, or Soma, the lexical co-occurrences of *mīdhvās* with *rudrā* amount to 17% of the attestations of *mīdhvās* and 9% of those of *rudrā*. This correlation is supplemented by the co-occurrence, rather less frequent, of *mīdhvās* with the Maruts and Rodaṣī.

This early Vedic specialization of the term lends colour to the proposed connection of Bactrian *μoζδοοαβο* with *mīdhvās*, *μoζδοοαβο* being depicted on Kushan coins as a trident-bearer (Sims-Williams, loc. cit.) and apparently correlated in the Bactrian inscription with Umma. Given the Kushan interest in Śiva, it seems consistent to assume that a connection was also envisaged between Umma and the Indian Umā. In India, Umā is characterized at first only by her remote provenance (*Kenop.* 25: Umā Haimavatī) and as being the mate of Rudra Mīdhvāṣṭama: *TĀr.* 10.16–18 ‘*rudrāya prācetase mīdhvāṣṭamāya*’ (RV 1.43.1) ... *hiranyapataye mbikāpataya umāpataye paśupataye namaḥ*.¹¹

The favour shown by the Kushans towards Rudra Mīdhvān and Vāsudeva may be related specifically to the neo-Vedic thinking that underlies the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, where, as in *Mahābhārata*, the word *mīdhvas* refers to Rudra-Śiva alone, but where its use in association with *mīdhvāṣṭama* (*BhP* 4.7.6 *mīdhvāṣṭamoditam*) also implies a reference back to RV 1.43.1 (*rudrāya prācetase mīdhvāṣṭamāya*). It is used there (*BhP* 4.24) in an instruction, the Rudragīta, given by Śiva to devotees of Viṣṇu, where Śiva describes the object of their mutual devotion as Atman (v. 33: *sarvasmā ātmane namaḥ*) and identifies him as a spectrum of entities stretching from a transcendental Vāsudeva at the outset (v. 34: *namaḥ ... vāsudevāya śāntāya kūṭasthāya*) to an immanent Mīdhvān Rudra at the climax (v. 43):

śaktitrayasametāya mīdhvase 'hamkṛtātmane,
cetaākūṭirūpāya namo vāco vibhūtaye.¹²

Here the imputed faculties of self-awareness, conscious will, and speech, centred

¹¹ The *TĀr.* text could be an attempt to find a Vedic pedigree for the Umā Haimavatī of *Kenop.* Rgvedic Rudra Mīdhvāṣṭama is first associated with *hiranya*, i.e. the *Naighaṇṭu* gloss *heman* ‘gold’ may be being used to explain *haimavatī*; and then associated with Ambikā and Umā, i.e. *āmbikā* may be being offered as a Vedic version of *umā*; finally he is identified as Paśupati. There is a reminiscence of this collocation in Tantric representations of Umā as the only one of the 64 forms of Devī to be surrounded by animals (Bühnemann and Tachikawa, *The Hindu deities illustrated*, Tokyo, 1990, 118).

The epithet *haimavatī* could in reality be evidence that the name Umā is indeed an adaptation of the *umā* which denotes flax (straw?) in *SBr.* 6.6.1.24, since the plant was indigenous, not to India, but to the Near East and Western Tibet (G. Watt, *The commercial products of India*, London, 1908, 720); and Afghanistan? The word *umā* is shared only with languages of the Hindu Kush (*EW*, I, 225). The *SBr.* idea that *umā* straw forms the amnion of the cosmic yoni could be the basis of Umā’s promotion to the status of muni in *Kenop.* and consort of *hiranyarūpa* Rudra in *TĀr.*

¹² The Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology translation (Delhi, 1976) takes the second hemistich to refer to Brahmā, but this is ruled out by the construction, the reference (in *cetaākūṭirūpāya*) to the *rudrāya prācetase* of RV 1.43.1, and the correlation of *śakti* with *vāc*. It does, however, correctly render *mīdhvas* as ‘Rudra’, in keeping with Mīdhvān’s Vedic status. The speaker of the verses is named as Rudra in the ‘stage direction’ inserted before v. 27, but this is less appropriate since the text itself uses *śiva* among many other equivalent epithets (including *mīdhvāṣṭama*) in referring to him. The oration is named *rudragītam* in the colophon of printed editions (but not of the Śāradā MS). The fact that the devotees of Viṣṇu to whom it is addressed are named as *Pracetasaḥ* is another approximate allusion to the wording of RV 1.43.1 *kād ... prācetase ... vocēma śāntamaṃ hr̥dē*.

on *cetas*, surely imply an expansion of the epithet *prācetaśe* applied to Rudra in the Ṛgvedic source. Śiva is in effect congratulating himself on being the ultimate and most approachable and responsive personal form of the highest divinity. Uniquely in the literature (so far as it has been evaluated lexicographically), the term *Mīḍhvān* is being used to inculcate a well-defined theological pairing of Rudra versus Vāsudeva, alongside the mythological pairing of Śiva versus Viṣṇu. The Ṛgveda with its fluctuating notion of *mīḍhvās* as an epithet identifying a fertilizing father (Rudra) of rain-gods (Maruts) and lavish giver of boons (Agni, etc.) is the immediate source and inspiration for the terminology.¹³

The inspiration for this neo-Vedic Rudragīta, where the acquisition of Śakti marks the culmination of the evolution of the Atman, could well have been the late Vedic 'Brāhmī Upaniṣad' credited to Umā Haimavatī in *Kenopaniṣad*, where *brāhman* is declared to be the real power behind the gods Agni, Vāyu, Indra. The Bactrians may have retained a reminiscence of the Old Iranian divine epithet *Mīḍhušī, encouraging them to associate Umā Haimavatī, the benign spouse of *Mīḍhvān*, the Gr̥hyasūtras' *Mīḍhušī*, with Iranian Umma. From that could stem the adoption of the correlated Bhāgavata concept of *Mīḍhvān*. Such borrowing would attest the original importance of the *BhP* passage, drawing attention to an important concept linking Ṛgvedic poetry with an otherwise virtually obsolete epithet of classical Hinduism, and saving the nucleus of *BhP* from the ignominy of a late dating.

Sims-Williams concludes that Ir. **miḍdvah* must have been partly replaced by a stem **miḍdvan* in the history of Khotanese and Bactrian. Another simpler possibility may be that Bactrian *μoζδοοαβο* has borrowed neo-Vedic *mīḍhvān* with appropriate adaptation to the Iranian form of the word, and that Khotanese *mā(ṣ)ḍān(a)*- beside inherited *māde* has a similar origin. The thematization of Sanskrit *bhagavān*, etc. when borrowed into medieval Hindi (e.g. *Rāmcaritmānas*, ed. Gita Press, Dohā 128: *bhagavāna* rhymed with *māna*) may parallel the extended Bactrian form. Admittedly, the stem *vivāsvan* makes an appearance in the (later?) Ṛgveda, while Avestan has **vivahuš-* and **vivahvan-* forms: but as the basis there appears to be a *-vant* stem, that piece of evidence does not greatly strengthen the alternative hypothesis.

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¹³ The connection, if one may be postulated, between Ār. Up. Vāsudeva (hence Epic Vasudeva?) and Agni's RV epithet *vasudāvan vāsupati* is much less clear.